

Friends of St James Mission and School

Newsletter

March 2019

"Let us now praise famous men"--

Men of little showing--
For their work continueth,
And their work continueth,
Broad and deep continues,
Greater than their knowing!

This is the first verse of a poem written by Rudyard Kipling and begins the book 'Stalky & Co'. Written by schoolboys it goes on, in time-honoured tradition to mock the teachers at their school. None-the-less, there is in the poem an acknowledgement that despite the discipline being at times tyrannical, they are who they are in large part because of that education.

The opening line, 'Let us now praise famous men-' comes from Ecclesiasticus chapter 44. The chapter begins with these words and continues:

'And some there be, which have no memorial; who are perished, as though they had never been; and are become as though they had never been born; and their children after them.

But these were merciful men, whose righteousness hath not been forgotten.
With their seed shall continually remain a good inheritance, and their children are within the covenant.'

The Kipling poem is specifically about the teachers at Stalky's school but Ecclesiasticus throws the net wider. Parents, too, impart their knowledge and guide as best they can. It's also true of peripheral family and friends. As they say in Africa, 'It takes a village to raise a child'.

St James is most certainly a school but in its own way it is also a family, even a village. In my time there in the 1980's the girls referred often to Eelin as 'mother' and Frank of course as 'father' and in that isolated and occasionally tense environment, relationships were established that were to last a lifetime.

Recently I mentioned to a friend here in Shetland that raising money for Friends of St James was an on-going struggle. "Have you thought of involving ex-pupils in your charity?" she asked. Well I mentioned this to Chris Peskett and Chris mentioned it to Sibó Sesay. Sibó is an ex-pupil and she and Chris have remained good friends. Sibó now lives in the UK but was soon to travel to Zimbabwe for a school reunion. So Sibó brought up the idea of getting involved at the reunion and the response was an enthusiastic and unanimous YES!

I shall let Sibó speak for herself:

"It was a year of organising, our first reunion on the 15th Dec 2018, for the class of girls 1982 to 1987. The excitement was palpable as the days grew closer. Girls are

distributed all over the world, with most girls still in Zimbabwe. We shared amongst our group about where we are in our life journeys.

The reunion was full of laughter, love and gratitude for the great education we received. Thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Beardall and all the teachers who tirelessly taught us. We spoke about all our teachers. (Sibo told the girls about the work of FSJMS). The girls were keen to know about FSJMS, and Sibongile gave an update about the work of the charity to the excited former students.

Our St James Alumni consists of a powerful group of women in education, from Principal Schools Inspector, teachers, banking, administrators, managers, nurses, health educators, entrepreneurs working for themselves, business owners. We have international social workers and directors, nurse practitioners to name but a few. It was a proud day to see what we have all become. The love of our school and the drive to support it was powerful.

A committee was formed and our chairperson in Zimbabwe is Zanele Muyambo who works as the Principal Schools Inspector.

Zimbabwe FSJMS will be the physical contact for FSJMS when required. Girls want to contribute funds to FSJMS and any projects that the Friends support and for fees paid for students or any other school project.

We hope that being present in the country we will be able to offer practical support and more direct communication with FSJMS in the UK.

FSJMS ZIM former students committee.

The Management committee consists of:

Chairperson: Zanele Muyambo (Pilime)

Deputy: Sifelani Tshabangu

Liaison Officers: Sibongile Nyathi)

Kate Musimwa (Mhambi) USA

Dorothy Kadzikano (Dube) UK

Secretary: Rosemary Mavengere

Deputy: Suku Mlalazi

Committee Members:

Sisa Dube

Estella Mafa UK

Heather Ndlovu

Hilda Makumbe

Sibongile Matshokoto

After sharing our reunion stories in social media, most girls in UK and other Diaspora are keen to join FSJMS UK. The ones in Zimbabwe are keen to join the Zimbabwe group and contribute to its growth.

Sibonokuhle Sibanda was deputy head girl during our school days. She is keen to take on a role in the UK

The girls reiterated their commitment to the Friends of St James. The next meeting is planned for 6th April to coincide with the FSJMS AGM. A face time call will be shared by the two groups.

On 29th March Sibongile and some of the Zimbabwe committee will be visiting St James





Delighted to see our ex-students again, full of energy and enthusiasm and looking forward to our new partnership!

This is an exciting new development and we are so pleased to be able to join with ex pupils both in the UK and Zimbabwe to continue supporting the school in whatever way we are able.

Big thanks to all now involved in the committee and to Sibó for taking the idea to them and to Chris for mentioning it to Sibó and to Wendy, my Shetland friend for pointing out the obvious!

Let us now praise oranges!



The burst of fragrance when you first pierce the skin of an orange; the fizz and spray and the pleasing tickle in your nose as you breathe in the sweet and tangy smell. Then there are the endless possibilities of patterns you can make with all the little pieces of peel.

Our first learning experiences are so important. Being exposed to all sorts of sensations and experiences is so important. The pre-school does great work in exposing local children to a broader range of experiences. Here they can play and learn and eat together in a safe and colourful environment. Their learning creates an important foundation for their continued education in primary school and, with any luck, into secondary school too.

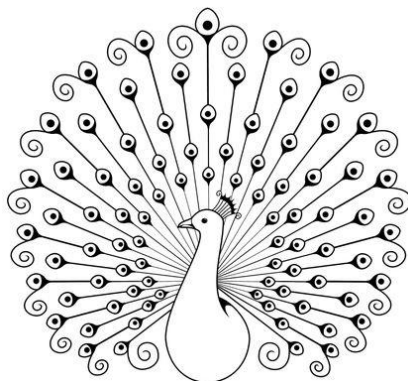


Meantime an FSJMS committee member very kindly donated money for the benefit of the primary school. They had expressed a need for a television and DVD player and we are pleased to say these have now been purchased and, God willing, are being used for the benefit of the primary school pupils, perhaps for the pre-school too!

Oh yay! Oh yay!

Only one month to go until the FSJMS AGM
Please do join us if you can!

SATURDAY 6th April 2019 at
St. Mary the Virgin, Station Road, West Moors, Ferndown, Dorset, BH22 0JF
11.30am onwards: coffee in the church hall (adjoining)
12 noon: prayers in church
12.45 – 14.00: lunch in church hall
14.00 – 16.00: AGM
RSVP sarahsspencer@hotmail.co.uk



*Compiled by
Janice Armstrong*